1. The book opens with an inscription on the title page by Thomas Parke D’Invilliers. D’Invilliers is a character in another book by Fitzgerald called *This Side of Paradise*; he based the character on John Peale Bishop, a close friend and tutor of Fitzgerald’s at Princeton.

TITLE PAGE

Then wear the gold hat, if that will move her;

If you can bounce high, bounce for her too,

Till she cry “Lover, gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover,

I must have you!”

1. Paraphrase the inscription:
2. Describe the tone (attitude) of the four lines.

1. How would you describe the relationship between the narrator and his father?

CHAPTER ONE

2. What is your reaction to Nick’s comment, “I’m inclined to reserve all judgments” (1)?

3. What does Nick mean by “a sense of the fundamental decencies is parceled out unequally at birth” (2)?

4. What yearning is apparent in Nick’s recollection, “When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever” (6)?

5. Why is Gatsby “exempt from [Nick’s] reaction” (6)?

6. Nick describes Gatsby as having “a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person” (6). Look at the context—and remember this is word is NOT the same as romance . “Romantic” means idealistic, dreamy, quixotic, starry-eyed, optimistic. Why do you guess this is admirable to Nick (read around the statement)?

7. Identify what you think Nick’s attitude toward Gatsby is at the beginning of the novel? Cite at least five words/phrases that prove you’re right.

8. What is Nick’s attitude toward his new life on the East Coast?

9. Interpret the meaning of Nick’s thought, “And so it happened on a warm windy evening I drove over to East Egg to see two old friends whom I scarcely knew at all” (10-11)?

10. What is the effect of the following description from chapter one?

The windows were ajar and gleaming white against the fresh grass outside that seemed to grow a little way into the house. A breeze blew through the room, blew curtains in at one end and out the other like pale flags, twisting them up toward the frosted wedding-cake of the ceiling, and then rippled over the wine-colored rug, making a shadow on it as wind does on the sea. (12)

11. How are Daisy and Jordan described when Nick enters the room, and what effect does this have on the reader?

12. How does Daisy regard her husband’s physical strength? Why does she choose to reveal the bruise?

13. What draws Tom to Goddard’s book, *The Rise of the Colored Empires*?

14. As Tom describes the book, Daisy says “We’ve got to beat them down” (18) and winks. What does this suggest about Daisy?

15. Daisy tells Nick that minutes after her daughter was born she said “I’m glad it’s a girl. And I hope she’ll be a fool—that’s the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool” (21). Look at the context of her comment. What is she saying *below the surface* of her words?

16. What is the tone behind the statement, “Sophisticated—God, I’m so sophisticated” (22)?

17. On page 24, Daisy reports that Jordan is a friend from her childhood: “our white girlhood was passed together there.

Our beautiful white—“ Then Tom interrupts, demanding to know if Daisy gave Nick “a little heart-to-heart talk on the

veranda” (24). Daisy says she can’t remember . . . but maybe they had talked about the Nordic race. Nick isn’t stupid;

he knows what Daisy and Tom are passive-aggressively saying to each other. You aren’t stupid either! Rewrite this

exchange with the direct messages (what they would say if they were direct with each other).

18. What is the tone of Nick’s reflection about his reasons for coming East and his attitude toward his former girlfriend?

19. As Nick drives away from the Buchanans’ home, he thinks “that the thing for Daisy to do was to rush out of the house, child in arms—but apparently there were no such intentions in her head” (25). Why not? Clearly Tom is a brutish, pig-headed cheater. What are some reasons she might stay?

20. On page 25 we get our first glimpse of Gatsby. How would you describe Nick’s tone in that first description? Cite at least five details that support your argument.